



NEWS RELEASE

*Office of the
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for the
District of Nebraska*
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March 30, 2011

United States Attorney Deborah Gilg and the FBI announce the following information for the attention of the media:

Event Triggering this Release:

On March 30, 2011 a federal jury returned a guilty verdict against Christopher Clay following a two day trial. Clay was convicted of assault with a dangerous weapon and assault resulting in serious bodily injury. Sentencing is set for June 28, 2011.

The evidence presented at trial showed that during the early morning hours of January 27, 2007, Christopher Clay and others were cruising around the Omaha and Winnebago Indian Reservations. As they were returning to Winnebago, they were chased by an SUV containing a group from Walthill, Nebraska. The SUV hit the vehicle Clay was in and knocked it into a ditch. Thereafter, the occupants of the two cars began fighting. Fighting continued throughout the early morning hours and at other locations. The minor victim, age 15 at the time, was one of the individuals who had been in the SUV. Leopoldo Sanchez got out of his vehicle and struck the victim. The victim ran towards the back of the housing projects and was chased by Sanchez and Clay. When Clay and Sanchez caught up to him they knocked him to the ground. Clay got on top of the top of the victim while Sanchez cut the victim with a knife from the right side of his neck, across the back of his neck, and all the way to his left shoulder. The victim suffered two other stabs wounds to his back and one to his arm.

The victim was taken to the Indian Health Services hospital in Winnebago, but had to be transferred to the Mercy Medical Center in Sioux City, Iowa where surgery was necessary to repair the wounds. The wound was so deep that a muscle in the victim's shoulder was transected.

Clay was 16 at the time of the assault and Sanchez was 17. Sanchez pleaded guilty to assault with a dangerous weapon before the trial began.

Although the indictment was filed in 2009, there had been a prior Information of Juvenile Delinquency filed. The case was then transferred to adult court on motion of the government. In addition, there was an interim appeal to the Eighth Circuit regarding evidentiary rulings which caused the trial in this matter to be delayed.

Name of Defendant: Christopher Clay

AKA:

Age: 20

City of residence: Winnebago, Nebraska

Crime(s) Charged and Potential Penalty (A CHARGE is merely an accusation and every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty) Count I charged assault with a dangerous weapon. The maximum punishment is 10 years of imprisonment and/or a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised. Count II charged assault resulting in serious bodily injury. The maximum punishment is 10 years of imprisonment and/or a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised.

Specific Location of Alleged Crime: Winnebago, Nebraska

Location of Arrest: Winnebago, Nebraska

Alleged Dollar Loss/Type and Quantity of Drug:

Others Charged in Same Scheme: Leopoldo Sanchez

Relevant Dates:

Date of Alleged Crime: January 27, 2007

Federal Arrest Date: The defendant was placed on bond following the initial juvenile delinquency proceedings.

Date Complaint Issued:

Indictment Returned Date: March 20, 2009

Initial Appearance Date: March 27

Plea or Trial and Date(s): Trial dates were March 29-30

Sentencing Date: June 28, 2011

Next Court Hearing Type and Date:

Assigned Magistrate Judge: Honorable Thomas D. Thalken

Held without Bond, or Released from Custody: Released from custody

In Continuous Custody Since:

Assigned District Court Judge: Honorable Lyle E. Strom, Senior U.S. District Court Judge

Initials of Assigned AUSA/Preparer of THIS Release: DRS